



FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Thursday, May 20, 1999

J.C. Watts, Jr.
Chairman
4th District, Oklahoma

House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.R. 883—American Land Sovereignty Protection Act

H.R. 4—National Missile Defense Act (Agreeing to Senate Amendments)



H.R. 883—American Land Sovereignty Protection Act

Floor Situation: The House will consider H.R. 883 as its first order of business today. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted a modified open rule that provides one hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Resources Committee. The rule makes in order only those amendments that have been pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*, and limits total debate time on amendments to four hours. The chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone votes and reduce the voting time on a postponed vote to five minutes, so long as it follows a regular 15-minute vote. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Summary: H.R. 883 amends the National Historic Preservation Act (*P.L. 96-515*) to (1) require the legislative consent of Congress before nominating a property located in the United States for inclusion on the World Heritage List; (2) prohibit any federal official from nominating U.S. property for designation as a Biosphere Reserve; (3) terminate existing Biosphere Reserves unless certain conditions are met; and (4) prohibit any federal official from nominating or designating any federal land for a special or restricted use under any international agreement unless specifically authorized by law. CBO estimates that enactment will have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill was introduced by Mr. Young; and was reported by the Resources Committee by a vote of 26-14 on May 5, 1999.

Views: The Republican leadership supports passage of the measure. The Clinton Administration opposes the bill and has pledged to veto it.

Amendments: At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following amendments to H.R. 883:

Mr. Young may offer an amendment (#1) to extend the period of time for Congress to authorize existing biosphere reserves from December 31, 2000, to December 31, 2003. **Staff Contact:** *John Rishel, x6-0242*

Mr. Sweeney may offer an amendment to expand the duties of the Secretary of the Interior's management plan under H.R. 883 to ensure that biosphere designations within states do not affect state or local government revenue, including revenue for public education programs. Under the bill, existing biospheres must be authorized by Congress and be subject to a management plan that protects adjacent non-federal property. **Staff Contact:** *Mike Power, x5-5614*

Mr. Udall (CO) may offer an amendment (#5) to exclude all Biosphere Reserves located in Colorado from provisions in the bill that currently rescind the designations of existing Biosphere Reserves unless authorized by Congress. **Staff Contact:** *Stan Sloss, x5-2161*

Mr. Vento may offer one or several of a series of amendments (#6-#8) to modify the bill's definition of the term "international agreement." Currently, the bill defines international agreement as any treaty between the U.S. or any U.S. agency and any foreign agency that has a primary purpose of conserving, preserving, or protecting the environment. The amendments are designed to prohibit federal officials from entering into international agreements to allow international *management* of heritage sites and biosphere reserves in the U.S., as opposed to agreements to conserve or protect a particular site. **Staff Contact:** *Lewis Crenshaw, x5-6631*

Mr. Vento may offer an amendment (#9) to prohibit a federal official from entering into an agreement with a foreign agency that allows the disposal and management of U.S. land, or dictating the use of the land, unless authorized by law. **Staff Contact:** *Lewis Crenshaw, x5-6631*

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #14, May 14, 1999.



H.R. 4—National Missile Defense Act (Agreeing to Senate Amendments)

Floor Situation: The House will consider Senate amendments to H.R. 4 after it completes consideration of H.R. 883. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted a rule making in order a motion to concur with the Senate amendment to the bill. The rule provides one hour of debate on the motion, equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Armed Services Committee.

Summary: H.R. 4 declares that it is the policy of the United States to: (1) deploy as soon as technologically possible an effective National Missile Defense (NMD) system capable of defending U.S. territory against limited ballistic missile attack (whether accidental, unauthorized, or deliberate), with funding subject to the annual authorization of appropriations and the annual appropriations of funds for NMD; and (2) to seek continued negotiated reductions in Russian nuclear forces.

The House passed H.R. 4 by a vote of 317-105 on March 18, 1999. The Senate passed its version of the bill (S. 257) by a vote of 97-3 on March 17. On May 18, the Senate took up H.R. 4, substituted the text of S. 257, and passed the measure by unanimous consent.

Views: The Republican Leadership supports passage of the bill. An official Clinton Administration position was unavailable at press time.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest* Vol. XXVIII, #7, Pt. II, March 16, 1999.



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